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ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE SESSION

Note by the Secretariat

1. In its resolution 1995/30 of 3 March 1995, the Commission on Human Rights endorsed the recommendation of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities that the Centre for Human Rights organize a workshop on the possible establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people. The Commission recommended that the outcome of the workshop be transmitted to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations at its thirteenth session and that the Working Group submit its views and suggestions on this question, through the Sub-Commission, to the Commission at its fifty-second session. The present note provides information relating to the possible establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/30.

2. At the invitation of the Government of Denmark, a workshop on the proposed permanent forum was held at Copenhagen from 26 to 28 June 1995. The report of the workshop (E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/1995/7) was submitted to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations at its thirteenth session (24 - 28 July 1995). The comments and suggestions of the Working Group are contained in paragraphs 142-151 and 173-175 of its report to the Sub-Commission (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1995/24).

3. Subsequently the Sub-Commission adopted resolution 1995/39 of 24 August 1995, in which it requested the Secretary-General to transmit the report of

the workshop to Governments and intergovernmental and indigenous organizations inviting them to express their views on the forum, and to review existing mechanisms, procedures and programmes within the United Nations for the promotion and coordination of the rights of indigenous people. The Sub-Commission recommended that the permanent forum be established in the early part of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, that its mandate should include questions relating to human rights, development, the environment, health, education and culture, and that its membership consist of independent experts as well as representatives of Governments and indigenous organizations. It also recommended that the Centre for Human Rights organize a second workshop on a possible permanent forum for indigenous people.

4. The reports referred to in this note are available as background documents at the fifty-second session of the Commission on Human Rights.